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## LITERARY CORRESPONDENCE.

### FRANCE.

The new book of M. FR. PAULHAN, *Les types intellectuels, Esprits logiques et esprits faux*, is a continuation and amplification of its predecessor, *Les caractères*. M. Paulhan attempts a searching examination of the human mind, with a view to indicating such of its qualities as can be arranged in a definitely graduated scale, the model of which is a perfected psychological scheme defined *a priori*. The author discovers the required psychological model in systematic association or in "finality," and I shall not attack his doctrine upon this point, but shall restrict my remarks to his mode of arranging intellectual types.

The author is guided by a distinction, antecedently made, between the *form* of mind, or its modes of operation, and its *matter*, or the thoughts and images characteristic of men as members of classes. Is this distinction a legitimate one? It doubtless is so, for the rational or irrational character of the mind (I should have preferred the antithesis *Esprits justes et esprits faux*) may manifest itself alike in two totally different persons, say a musician and a jurist, who do not work upon the same materials, and who make use of different thoughts and images. There are reasoning and unreasoning types of poetical imagination, as I myself pointed out not long ago. Nevertheless, I believe there are difficulties in the path on which M. Paulhan has ventured.

No one will think of disputing his right to establish, first, a primary series of intellectual characteristics, resting, as he would formulate it, (1) upon the degree of independence asserted by the

intellect over the emotions and (2) upon the form of the mind's associations, and then subsequently to set up a secondary series founded upon the thoughts and images with which the mind operates. But have we not here two principles of classification absolutely independent rather than a set of characters naturally subordinated to one another? Do not categories of *form* and categories of *matter* apply to two facts alike general and alike important according to the view which we take of them? The method pursued by M. Paulhan consists, therefore, in discovering in single individuals, viewed apart, such and such marks, all of which have been previously defined by abstract analysis. It offers thus a means of giving excellent descriptions and highly finished portraits. But if we attempt to assort individuals by the rigid categories here marked out we shall run the risk of dissipating the total personality of the individual, and of losing it altogether. The method culminates rather in a reasoned set of interrogatories than in a real classification.

"Between abstract laws and individuals," writes M. Paulhan, "there are no mental groups—no intellectual species—*having interest for general psychology*." By this declaration he seems to have definitely circumscribed his plan and to deny all psychological value to the natural history of societies founded upon such spontaneously engendered groups as race, classes, and professions. Yet is it not undeniable that the choice of a profession presupposes *some* profound resemblances between individuals who may in other respects be unlike? This is an open question. But the creation of professional types encounters difficulties and is susceptible of criticism, the justness of which I can all the more appreciate from having once personally attempted the task. I am by no means pleading *pro domo med*, but am concerned only with discovering the truth. In fine, then, I understand perfectly well how M. Paulhan can produce good portraits by his method, but am at a loss to perceive how his individuals are to be classified in relation to one another; and I particularly doubt if the groups obtained by his methods will ever exhibit anything approaching to lifelike objectivity or reality.

In the meantime it will be well to await the appearance of the second volume, which M. Paulhan has announced, when we can judge of the entire work with perfect knowledge. A high value it will always possess, both by its wealth of details and by the place which it occupies in the philosophical thought of the master. I should offer some apology for having devoted so few lines to the commendation of the book if that were not superfluous in the case of a writer of the author's standing.

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M. L. MARILLIER offers us a French translation of the learned work of ANDREW LANG, *Mythes, cultes et religions*. As there is no necessity of speaking of the work itself here, I shall apply myself to the remarkable introduction which the translator has prefixed to it. M. Marillier first refers to the new direction which the study of religion has taken, in consequence of which the anthropological and psychological school has dethroned the philological school followed by Max Müller. The comparative study of religions will enable us, he says, to disclose this truth that there exists a religion common to all humanity, or at least a mythology based upon ideas and modes of knowing and feeling, which are the same for all human beings, no matter what their race or nationality may be. In the presence of the phenomena of nature men have everywhere put the same questions and given approximately the same answers. The myths are innumerable, but may be reduced to a small number of types. Mythologies, in fine, lie at the foundations of all religious edifices; they represent a common aggregate of ideas and of sentiments, and at the beginning took the place of theology, science, and ethics.

Are myths things of the past? Must we accept with Comte that the different forms of thought in succeeding each other replace each other? M. Marillier is not of this opinion. He does not believe that science will eliminate metaphysics. All depends upon the significance in which the word is used, for the answer will be different according as we consider the lower or the higher forms of speculation. Sound knowledge will never exclude broad and comprehensive inductions; but it is incompatible, in one and the same

mind, with arbitrary and infantile fancies which have not the character of positive hypotheses. Comte made an unfortunate application of the vague word metaphysics, and one which has considerably injured his doctrine. It is advisable to extend his conception instead of narrowing it, and then the incontestable truth which it expresses will appear in its full light.

M. Marillier also apparently reproaches Comte with having failed to recognise the existence of a *special* religious emotion. But what can such a religious emotion mean, separated from all "dogmatic affirmation" and from all "moral precepts"? Is it sufficient to assure the existence of religion,—that "assemblage of emotional states, of sentiments and desires," to which M. Marillier attributes distinct originality, although comparing it to æsthetical emotions? The religious emotion, in my eyes, is intimately connected with the mental state of the individual and the race, and it is dependent at all times upon the beliefs actually living in the minds of men. It is the echo, in the emotional life, of our conception of the world, whether the same be derived from tradition or from science, whether it be formed of faith or of scientific hypothesis. And this religious emotion actually offers widely diverging characteristics, even in men like Francis de Assisi and a Vincent de Paul, in Herbert Spencer and Guyau, not to speak of the savage who has his head full of superstitions and terrors. It does not wear with all of us the same dress; it is continually modifying, according to the state of our general beliefs; it is a reflected product of the psychological state, or if you wish, a particular aspect of our fundamental emotions, but not a spontaneous and primordial fact. Every attempt at constructing a religion ought therefore to aim at producing a new knowledge, a new view of the world, which would thereupon engender a corresponding emotion. Thus it is I conceive the continuity and evolution of religious life, upon a basis common to the whole human species. Otherwise, if religion were not the work of man himself and a product of his culture, we should be forced to revert to supernatural revelations and to the mysteries of an inexplicable psychology.

M. SULLY PRUDHOMME, in his *Que sais-je ? Examen de conscience*,<sup>1</sup> has taken up the fundamental problems of philosophy. He “re-thinks” them after his own fashion, but does not succeed in elucidating them. Neither the notions of existence and of substance, nor the doctrines of free will and determinism receive new light from his complicated analyses. The fact is that, worn out at last by the effort he has put forth, the poet takes refuge in “sentiment”; and by sentiment he understands a genuine inward revelation, the connecting bond of which with any sort of metaphysical existence escapes us. He has borrowed from his excursion into the domain of modern science a prudence that discomposes him and runs counter to his true philosophical nature, which tends to ancient idealism. He is precise neither as to the meaning of soul nor as to that of ideals. His vision is stationary and without support, and his criticisms are nowhere striking. But it is surprising that he has retained the phantom of the *unknowable* after having properly enough declared that he regards it merely as a synonym of what will always remain unknown to man in the phenomena of the universe,

Dialectic subtlety, inability to throw a vivid light on the great problems, recourse to sentiment and to the mysterious endowment of the poet and the artist,—such are the characteristics of the work of M. Sully Prudhomme. But his effort is of altogether too noble a character and of too great rareness among the poets of our day not to command our appreciation and sympathy. The faults of his work have not prevented its having many lofty and eloquent pages. M. Sully Prudhomme has a soul of delicate fibre and a mind of frankness, and these are qualities which render him in our eyes a man of superior worth.

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M. JULES PAYOT has taken up similar problems in his book *De la croyance*. I shall not discuss the psychological theory upon which he has based his work, and which regards belief as a genus of which certitude is merely a species, belief itself being declared identical

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<sup>1</sup>P. Lemerre, publisher. The other works mentioned are published by F. Alcan.

with will. The state of relativism and subjectivism to which we are subject leads M. Payot to declare that reality is without our reach, and conducts him to an "irremediable intellectual scepticism." He opines, however, that it will not do to allow scepticism to enter the domain of ethics, and that it is imperative to create in the consciousness of nations a system of moral beliefs of absolute universality. We can become, he says, masters of our own beliefs and almost entirely so of the beliefs of others, particularly those of children, which he seeks to show in the part of his work devoted to the "mechanism" of belief, after having studied its object and nature.

The project is an excellent one, although its realisation may be effected by different methods. Nevertheless, M. Payot appears to me to be laboring under an illusion when he speaks of "educating universal suffrage." This last institution possibly has not the solidity which he attributes to it, and many reasons make for the presumption that the progress of social organisation will modify it profoundly. Another point also affords me difficulty. M. Payot demands a faith "living and always ready for action and self-sacrifice," which he opposes to the "theoretical and abstract" faith. But is this opposition really so radical? And how are we to interpret it when he adds himself with eloquence and aptness that the triumphant idealism of to-day teaches us to *comprehend* "that what constitutes our worth is the fact of our being the transitory expression of the essence of things, and that our whole destiny and more so our duty is to labor to become the most perfect expression possible of the laws of this essence?"

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I regret not being able to discuss the solid thesis of M. E. THOUVEREZ, *Lé réalisme métaphysique*, from which I shall merely cite the author's belief "in the unity of all the principles, in the harmony of the world and of the mind, in the regular constancy of all rational laws, and in their existence in God who guarantees and directs them," and also his affirmation that the "reality of this God is the great miracle in the world which the world cannot comprehend."

I also regret being only able to mention the following works:

*Histoire de la philosophie atomistique*, by L. MABILLEAU, which is quite important; *La Théorie platonicienne des sciences*, by ELIE HALÉVY; *L'Ecole Saint-Simonienne*, by GEORGES WEILL, a very instructive book; and among the less voluminous productions a thesis of M. J. LACHELIER, which was widely noticed on its original appearance, entitled *Du fondement de l'induction*, and which is supplemented in its present new edition by the article *Psychologie et métaphysique*, to which perhaps we may refer later; an *Exposé critique des principes du positivisme contemporain*, by M. JEAN HALLEUX, in which the author seems to be bent especially on demonstrating that human knowledge, while having its root in sensuous experience, yet ultimately goes far beyond the data of experience; a French translation of the *Paradoxes* of Nordau; the new study of applied psychology to which M. F. QUEYRAT gives the title *Les caractères de l'éducation nouvelle*; and finally, the extracts from the ethics of the Chinese philosophers, which M. J. DE LANESSAN has conveyed to us from India and China.

I had almost forgotten, in a different order of studies, the learned and interesting work of M. C. BOUGLÉ, *Les sciences sociales en Allemagne*, arranged with a view of exhibiting to us, after the manner of Lazarus, the plan of a psychology of nations; after Simmel that of a science of morals; after Wagner that of a political economy; and after Ihering that of a philosophy of law.

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